



BORDESLEY MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

T2-08 LOCAL PARENT GOVERNOR ELECTION PROCEDURE

Tier 2 – Centrally Determined School Policy
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1. Bordesley Multi Academy Trust Mission Statement

We believe that success is achieved by working in partnership with parents, carers and the wider community. We are committed to working with our partners to ensure the very best outcomes for all our learners, from 3 to 19.

The significant guiding principles of the MAT are based around autonomy, trust, respect, equity and outstanding relationships. We believe that positive and constructive relationships are at the heart of every successful school. This allows the entire community to be valued and challenged to be their best, raising aspirations for all.

2. Introduction

The following guidance and procedure will be followed by all schools in the Bordesley Multi-Academy Trust when looking to appoint a new parent governor. It is based on the Worcestershire process.

The Trust's "Governance & Management Structure, and Terms of Reference" document specifies the number of Parent Local Governors should have.

It should be noted that the out-going Parent governor **should not be** re-appointed without the vacancy being offered to all other eligible parents.

3. Election Process

- 3.1 When a serving parent governor is reaching the end of their term of office, the clerk will inform the governing board and headteacher. It should not be the case that the out-going parent governor is re-appointed without the vacancy being offered to all other eligible parents. A timetable for an election should be agreed that minimises delay and avoids school holidays. The election should be held in advance of the outgoing governor's end of term of office e.g., six weeks ahead. Reference should be made to the desirable skills required by the governing board and any skills identified that are required can be referred to in the nomination letter.
- 3.2 The term of office shall be four years (unless otherwise stated on the instrument) with effect from the date of election, i.e., the date of the count or close of the nomination period, whichever is applicable. Appointments shall be made as soon as conveniently practicable after the termination/resignation of the former governor.
- 3.3 Those eligible to participate in the election process are parents or carers of registered pupils at the school at the time. Any such parent can be nominated, and each such parent will be entitled to cast one vote per vacancy, should a ballot be necessary.
- 3.4 The returning officer will circulate to parents the following:
 - A letter (Appendix 1) to parents via pupils where possible, notifying them that an election for a parent governor is required and inviting nominations on an enclosed nomination form which should indicate the arrangements for their return (where to, closing date and time).
 - Nomination forms (Appendix 2) will indicate the closing date for nominations, which will be no less than six school days from the date of issue. There will be provision for a supporting statement for candidates comprising of no more than 250 words.

- 3.5 The governing board should carry out a regular skills audit of governors and on occasion may ask for parents with particular skills/experience. This does not preclude any other member of the parent board from standing for election.
- 3.6 If only one nomination is received the individual should be advised they are returned unopposed and that their appointment would begin from the closing date of the nomination period subject to the completion of the declaration of disqualification form and that a DBS check is applied for within 21 days of appointment.
- 3.7 If not, enough parents stand for election to fill all of the vacancies, the governing board will appoint parent governors to the vacancy or vacancies, in accordance with the School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2012.
- 3.8 If there are more nominations than vacancies, a ballot will be conducted. Letters (Appendix 3) and ballot papers (Appendix 4) will, (with an appropriate level of security at each stage) need to be forwarded to parents (based on number of parents within the household) via pupils with a covering letter outlining the arrangements to reply and incorporating or enclosing the candidate's statement from the nomination form (Appendix 2). Families with more than one pupil at the school should receive ballot papers based on the number of parents in the household, which should be forwarded to parents via the eldest child. In order to avoid confusion when more than one ballot is taking place i.e., for parent and staff governors, it is desirable to use ballot papers of different colours.

At this stage, parents will need to be informed of the following:

- a) All parents of registered pupils are entitled to vote. Depending on the number of vacancies parents may be asked to vote for more than one candidate. Each parent can submit one ballot paper, regardless of the number of children they have attending the school,
 - b) The closing date and time for receipt of ballot papers,
 - c) Method of casting votes (location and availability of ballot boxes). Parents should be given the option to vote by post. No arrangements will be made for proxy voting,
 - d) Arrangements for counting votes (who will be permitted to attend),
 - e) Arrangements for dissemination of results,
 - f) If applicable, the candidates' personal statements will be enclosed.
- 3.9 The timetable should provide for no less than the following minimum periods of time for each stage in the election:
 - a) Nomination forms to be collected, completed and returned - six school days,
 - b) Casting of votes - six school days.
 - 3.10 Ballot boxes will need to be sited at such locations in the school as to provide for easy access to cast votes and for adequate security this would usually be in the school reception. In split site schools, provision will be necessary at each site. When not open for use (e.g., overnight) ballot boxes will need to be kept secure to prevent tampering. If more than one ballot is in progress at one time, ballot boxes will need to be clearly marked to indicate to which ballot they relate to. Parents will also be given the option to vote by post.

- 3.11 At the closing date, of the return of ballot papers, arrangements should be made by the returning officer for votes to be counted. Each candidate should be invited to be present and to bring a supporter of their choosing to act as scrutineer if they so wish, governors should also be invited, but there is no requirement for either to attend. The room should be laid out so that those not involved in counting cannot impede those doing so, or have access to the votes being counted. Candidates and scrutineers should be able to see what is happening. Counting procedures should be as follows:
- a) The Returning Officer opens and empties the ballot box in full view of those present (scrutineers should be shown that it is empty),
 - b) The Returning Officer will count the total number of ballot papers that were in the ballot box and enter this figure as total 'A' as indicated on Appendix 5,
 - c) Multiply total 'A' by the number of governors to be elected (i.e., where two governors are to be elected you would multiply by 2. The figure to be adjusted to reflect number of vacancies) in order to arrive at the total votes possible and enter this figure as total 'B'. If only one parent is to be elected total 'A' will represent the total votes cast and totals 'A' and 'B' will be the same,
 - d) The Returning Officer will count the votes cast for each candidate and enter them in the appropriate column. In order to balance the number of votes cast (total 'A') with the total votes possible (total 'B') it is essential that nil/spoilt votes be entered.
 - e) Questions related to spoilt or defaced ballot papers should be referred to the scrutineers for a decision and it may be advisable to note decisions on such related ballot papers and ask for scrutineers' initials in case of consequential disagreement.
 - f) Enter the total votes cast for all candidates (including nil/spoilt votes) as total 'C'. This figure should agree with the total entered as total 'B',
 - g) If totals 'B' and 'C' balance, the scrutineers should be requested to sign Appendix 5 to record the result of the ballot,
 - h) If totals 'B' and 'C' do not balance the procedure above should be repeated. The original Appendix 5 form should be retained for reference purposes,
 - i) The successful candidate will have the greater number of votes,
 - j) In the event of a tie there should be a recount. If this does not produce a clear result, the Returning Officer should, in the presence of the witnesses draw lots and the candidate picked will be the elected governor.
- 3.12 The School will inform all of the candidates individually about the result of the ballot.
- 3.13 The clerk will notify the Multi Academy Trust via the trust's Clerk to Trustees of the successful candidate(s) as soon as possible and provide: name, address, contact details, term of office as set out in the instrument of government.
- 3.14 The Multi Academy Trust and the school will ensure that the successful candidate has an appropriate induction so that they are aware of their responsibilities and are supported to play an active and effective part in the governing body.
- 3.15 Once the candidates have been informed, all parents should be notified of the result of the election, they can be notified via school newsletter and/or school website.

- 3.16 Ballot papers must be retained securely for six months in case the election result is challenged.

4. Notes

- 4.1 Some schools may be concerned about the confidentiality of voting and might consider using a “double envelope” voting system. These schools may wish to replace steps 8 and 9 with the following:
- In order to ensure confidentiality, parents will be provided with two envelopes – one unmarked and one printed. They will be asked to enclose the completed ballot paper in the unmarked envelope, then enclose this in the printed envelope, which the voter should complete and sign. This is to allow the returning officer to check eligibility to vote. A ballot box will be provided in the school, and parents will also be given the option to vote by post. No arrangements will be made for proxy voting.
 - As and when ballot papers are returned, the returning officer will check the name on each outer envelope for entitlement to vote and make a record of the return of the ballot paper. This should be done in the presence of at least one witness. The inner envelope will then be removed and placed in the ballot box for counting when the ballot closes.

5. Appendix 1 - Example Nomination Letter to Parent

Dear Parent/Carer

Election of Parent Governors

I am writing to invite you to stand for election as a local parent governor or nominate another parent to do so. In our school we have provision for **XXX** parent governor(s) and there is/are currently **XXX** of vacancy/vacancies.

The local governing board, with the headteacher, has responsibility for the running of the school. Local governing boards have three core strategic functions:

- Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
- Holding the headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils; and
- Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

The role of governor can be demanding but very rewarding. Parent governors serve a **four**-year term of office and under usual circumstances, can expect to spend between 10 and 20 days a year on governing duties. These include:

- attending meetings of the governing board, usually outside of school hours and contributing to governing board business;
- reading reports and papers and keeping up to date on the progress the school is making; and
- visiting the school from time to time during the school day.

You will be expected to sign a governors' Code of Conduct, and to have:

- a strong commitment to the role and improving outcomes for children;
- the inquisitiveness to question and analyse;
- the willingness to learn;
- good inter-personal skills;
- appropriate levels of literacy in English (unless a governing board is prepared to make special arrangements); and
- sufficient numeracy skills to understand basic data.

No special qualifications are needed. However, a DBS check is a statutory requirement and must be applied for within 21 days of election/appointment. The most important thing is to have a keen interest in the school and be prepared to play an active part in the governing boards work. However, we would particularly welcome nominations from parents with the following skills **<insert description of desired skills>**. Training is available for all governors and this local governing board has an expectation that those new to being a governor attend induction training.

Parents/carers who have paid employment in the school for 500 or more hours per academic year are not eligible to stand in these elections. Nominations must be from parents or carers with children at the school on the day that nominations close.

If you would like to stand for election, please complete the enclosed nomination form and return it to the school no later than **<insert date and time>**. You may also include a short personal statement to support your nomination, which should be no longer than 250 words. Self-nominations will be accepted, but if you are nominating another parent please seek their prior consent. If there are more nominations than vacancies the election will be by secret

ballot. If that is necessary, voting papers will be sent to all parents together with details of the ballot procedure.

We must stress that new statutory guidance advises that the local governing board publishes online for each governor certain information including their full name, relevant business interests, whether a governor serves on another governing board and relationships with staff in the school. There is a statutory requirement for all governors to have a DBS check and you would be expected to abide by and sign a code of conduct.

May I take this opportunity to thank you in advance for your support in this matter.

Yours faithfully,

XXX

Head Teacher

6. Appendix 2 - Nomination Form

Election of local parent governors

Please enter IN BLOCK LETTERS the name and address of the person being nominated for election:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Being the parent/guardian of (name of pupil): _____

Signature of person nominated: _____

Signature of proposer (if different to nominee): _____

Name and address in BLOCK letters of proposer (if different to nominee):

Personal Statement (maximum 250 words)

I wish to submit my nomination for the election of local parent governor (subject to DBS check).

I confirm

- a) that I am willing to stand as a candidate for election as a local parent governor.
- and
- b) that I am not disqualified from holding office for any of the reasons set out in the School Governance Regulations.

I understand that neither the headteacher nor the Chief Executive of the Trust bear responsibility for the validity of any statement made above.

Signature

(Date)

Completed nomination forms must be returned to the school by <insert date>

7. Appendix 3 - Model Ballot Letter

Dear Parent/Carer

PARENT GOVERNOR ELECTION

I wrote to you on <insert date> to invite nominations for the vacancy/vacancies for a local parent governor(s).

I am delighted to say that there has been a good response and there are <insert number> candidates for the <insert number> vacancy/vacancies. This means we must now hold a ballot.

Attached to this letter is:

- a ballot paper with the names of the candidates (in alphabetical order)
- a copy of the personal statements from the candidates who are <insert parents' names>.

You may vote for up to <insert number> equal to the number of vacancies of the candidates.

Each parent can submit one ballot paper, regardless of the number of children/students you have attending the school. As indicated on the ballot paper you should vote by marking an X alongside the name(s) of the parent(s) you support.

Once you have marked the ballot paper you should seal it in the envelope. This should then be put in the ballot box, which can be found <insert named location>, by six school days from the date of this letter. If it is not possible for you to vote in person, please return to the following address: <insert address for returning officer>.

The election will be decided by a simple majority of votes cast. In the event of a tie, lots will be drawn.

When the election has been completed, I will let you know the outcome. If in the meantime you have any queries, please let me know.

Yours faithfully,

XXX

Head Teacher

8. Appendix 4 - Model Ballot Paper

Election of Local Parent Governor for the period: _____

Nominations have been received from the following parents listed on the ballot paper below wishing to serve as one of **<insert no of vacancies>** parent governors on the school's governing board for a **four-year** period.

A ballot is therefore necessary, and a ballot paper is below for your use.

You may record one vote for up to **<insert number of vacancies>** candidates of your choice. **You must not vote more than once for the same candidate.**

When completed, votes should be cast in the ballot box situated **<insert named location>**. Postal votes should be forwarded to me by first class post and clearly endorsed "Local Parent Governor Elections - Ballot Paper".

The closing date for votes is **<insert date and time>**. Votes cast after the closing date will be invalid.

Candidates Personal Statements

<Insert a copy of candidates' personal statements>

Ballot Paper for **XXX** School Local Governing Board

Election of Local Parent Governor for the period: _____

Candidate	Mark an X to indicate your vote

Place an X in the box provided next to the names of up to **<insert number of vacancies>** candidates of your choice. No other mark should be made.

Incorrectly completed or defaced papers will be invalid.

9. Appendix 5 - Ballot Recording Sheet

Ballot Recording Sheet

<i>Number of Ballot Papers</i>		(A)
<i>Number of vacancies</i>		
Total number of possible votes		(B) = (A) x Number of Vacancies

<i>Candidate</i>	<i>Number of Votes</i>	
<i>Nil and Spoilt Votes</i>	<i>Number of Votes</i>	
Nil Votes		
Spoilt Votes		

Total number of valid votes cast + Nil Votes + Spoilt Votes		(C)
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- If **(B)** and **(C)** balance, then this form can be signed by the returning officer and scrutineers.
- If totals **(B)** and **(C)** do not balance the procedure above should be repeated. This form should be retained for reference purposes.

I confirm that the ballot counting procedure has been carried out per the approved procedure.

Returning Officer Name: _____ Signature: _____

Scrutineer Name: _____ Signature: _____

Scrutineer Name: _____ Signature: _____

Counting procedures should be as follows:

- a) The Returning Officer opens and empties the ballot box in full view of those present (scrutineers should be shown that they are empty),
- b) The Returning Officer will count the total number of ballot papers that were in the ballot box and enter this figure as total 'A',
- c) Multiply total 'A' by the number of governors to be elected (i.e., where two governors are to be elected you would multiply by 2. The figure to be adjusted to reflect number of vacancies) in order to arrive at the total votes possible and enter this figure as total 'B'. If only one parent is to be elected total 'A' will represent the total votes cast and totals 'A' and 'B' will be the same,
- d) The Returning Officer will count the votes cast for each candidate and enter them in the appropriate column. In order to balance the number of votes cast (total 'A') with the total votes possible (total 'B') it is essential that nil/spoilt votes be entered.
- e) Questions related to spoilt or defaced ballot papers should be referred to the scrutineers for a decision and it may be advisable to note decisions on such related ballot papers and ask for scrutineers' initials in case of consequential disagreement.
- f) Enter the total votes cast for all candidates (including nil/spoilt votes) as total 'C'. This figure should agree with the total entered as total 'B',
- g) If totals 'B' and 'C' balance, the scrutineers should be requested to sign Appendix 5 to record the result of the ballot,
- h) If totals 'B' and 'C' do not balance the procedure above should be repeated. The original Appendix 5 form should be retained for reference purposes,
- i) The successful candidate will have the greater number of votes,
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